

many are even now, cast into that common receptacle, the county poorhouse, where amid filth and neglect, they do not live but only languish out the burden of an existence that is scarcely more than physical, or they are consigned to an asylum for the insane where no special provision is made for them ; or still oftener, they are the constant, living, moving sorrow of the family that know no means to alleviate its own great grief, and cannot command, or even does not hope or know that a cheerful beam of gleaming intelligence might perhaps be made to flit over that face, or that in the evidences of care, modesty and cleanliness, there were proofs of awakened intelligence and of glimmering consciousness. Our Constitution deemed it possible to do what private means could not accomplish—devise means to train or educate to some degree all that is human and capable of being taught to imitate in such a creature and that could be called forth by painstaking effort. It is the proof of faith in the power of christian love and patient, sacrificing labor—labor that while we write has its reward in the traces of light and affection that flit over the faces of those unhappy beings on whom rest so great an affliction in the institution of South Boston, Syracuse, Media and other places. If aught can be done to shed one ray of hope or joy on the dreary pathway of such, let it be done—let the sceptic deride and scoff, let the inert and unloving yawn, but do not let the guardian of the poor and helpless—the State—be indifferent. If he is a benefactor who makes two blades of grass to grow where but one grew before, how much more so is the State that enlarges the power to enjoy life, and that recovers and redeems the victim of vicious appetite and those of feeble minds.

No greater proof can be given of the indifference to the welfare and character of the criminal and pauper population than the wretched hovels that are made to answer the purpose of almshouses, and the horrid places called jails, where every sense is offended. The Constitution of the State proposes to remove these blemishes from her character by requiring the